

# Who is responsible for making sure scheduling for drug testing is not predictable?



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by Jacob Bustad  
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What happens if a specimen collector you hire does not perform drug and alcohol testing on a random schedule? Who is at fault? — the collection agency or you? The answer may be YOU.

Although different agencies may work with different collectors in their drug and alcohol testing program, one responsibility always lies with the agency: *the scheduling of the testing*. Random (unpredictable) scheduling makes the procedure more effective as a deterrent to drug

and alcohol misuse.<sup>1</sup>

Cheryl Fisher, KDOT Drug & Alcohol Program Coordinator, recently returned from the FTA National D & A conference, where the need for random scheduling was stressed heavily. According to Fisher, random scheduling means spreading testing out throughout the year, the week, and all hours of safety-sensitive duty. The goal of random scheduling is to “increase deterrence through unpredictability.”

Fisher explained that the responsibility of test scheduling is solely the agency’s, and the collector would not be held responsible if testing was not scheduled properly.

It is the agency’s right and responsibility to tell the collector that testing be done properly and follow FTA guidelines. If a collector does not follow the agency’s schedule or other random testing guidelines, the agency should report that collector to Kansas’ Drug and Alcohol Coordination Program at TMHC, Inc., (785) 232-1196 in the Topeka area or (800) 888-0112 toll free; and to Fisher at [cherylfi@ksdot.org](mailto:cherylfi@ksdot.org).

Fisher added that during her statewide audits, as well as those being done nationwide by the FTA, random scheduling will be a primary focus. She emphasized that any findings about improper scheduling will be held against the transit agency, not the collector.

For more information, contact Cheryl Fisher at (785) 368-7091. ▲

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<sup>1</sup>Random *scheduling* is different than random *testing*, which refers to the selection of individuals to be tested. Selection for random testing is automated, using a computer.